

# District Review Executive Summary

## Covington Independent County School District

11/12/2006 – 11/17/2006

Jack Moreland, Superintendent

### Introduction

The Kentucky Department of Education conducted an audit of Covington Independent School District during the period of 11/12/2006 - 11/17/2006. This district's last combined accountability index was 60.6 and its classification was Assistance Level 2. Here are the most relevant facts and next step recommendations from the audit.

### District Deficiencies and Next Steps in Supporting its Low-Performing Schools

<b>1. Deficiency</b>	<b>District leadership has not provided oversight and assistance to school councils to ensure that councils have an intentional focus on student academic achievement.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	District leadership should accept responsibility to ensure school councils focus on academic achievement. District leadership should ensure that schools in level 3 assistance for a second consecutive biennium include actions in their improvement plans to strengthen school councils and school-based decision making processes (KRS 158.6455, KRS 160.346). District leadership should develop assistance plans to help these schools improve school councils (KRS 160.346). District leadership should consider assigning one staff member responsibility to ensure councils have required policies and by-laws. This person should coordinate training for councils. The coordinator should provide guidance and support to councils so that policies and planning procedures have potential to improve student achievement. District leadership should provide support in developing, monitoring, and revising improvement plans to meet student and school wide needs.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	Deficiency #1 has been partially implemented.  The superintendent and central office leadership have collaborated with the Kentucky Association of School Councils to ensure that required policies and bylaws are in place. District leadership has ensured that all schools in the district receive SBDM training. District leadership has also ensured that Holmes' council continues to meet despite its advisory status. The Implementation and Impact checks are referenced in Holmes High School's improvement plan, but SBDM minutes do not show that Implementation and Impact checks have been conducted at the meetings each month. According

	to the Holmes Assistance Plan, the superintendent, principal, and HSEs are to collaborate monthly to ensure that all SBDM policies and procedures are being implemented. These meetings have not taken place with all parties present.
<b>2. Deficiency</b>	<b>District leadership has not ensured that the certified personnel evaluation process has been used effectively to improve leadership skills, instructional efficacy and student achievement.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	District leadership should ensure that personnel evaluations are conducted, that evaluators are well-trained in the evaluation process and trained to evaluate staff emphasizing how to change leadership and teacher behaviors to result in student achievement gains. District leadership should identify ineffective evaluators and provide support such as partnering with effective evaluators for coaching and mentoring. District leadership should ensure that ineffective teachers are identified, corrective action plans are put in place and fully implemented and that proper support and follow-up by school leadership addresses teacher efficacy.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	Deficiency #2 has been partially implemented.  While not all teachers display high efficacy, leadership has begun to identify ineffective instruction through walkthroughs as well as student data analysis, and is using the growth planning process to support and correct poor performance. Highly skilled educators are providing coaching/mentoring services. District leadership and school leadership have indicated a more focused effort will be initiated during the second semester.
<b>3. Deficiency</b>	<b>District leadership has not developed processes to adequately monitor initiatives in the district, and specifically in low-performing schools including comprehensive planning.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	Long range planning should involve monitoring processes and procedures to ensure that programs are implemented effectively and modified. District leadership should integrate the use of resources. Leadership should collaboratively examine and prioritize programs. District leadership should consider grade configuration of schools based on what best meets the needs of students in grade eight. Leadership should conduct frequent implementation and impact checks of district and school improvement plans to determine impact on student achievement.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	Deficiency #3 has been partially implemented.  District leadership has provided assistance to the middle and high school to develop intervention plans in order to increase student achievement. In addition, district leadership collaborated with school leadership in developing a plan with the middle and high school

	<p>administrators to organize the eighth grade into teams and with a separate bell schedule. The plan was implemented at the beginning of this school year. The eighth grade teams have met regularly this year during their common planning time. The district also added an instructional coach to the eighth grade staff in order to assist with literacy intervention and instructional strategies. Common planning across all grade levels should continue to focus on instructional strategies and common assessments as well as the analysis of student work. School leadership and HSEs should fully support and monitor the impact of common planning meetings on teaching and learning.</p>
--	---

<b>4. Deficiency</b>	<b>District leadership has not ensured that school and district staffs acknowledge and address cultural differences of all students.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	The superintendent should designate a commission, supported by board policy and representing all stakeholders, to research and make recommendations concerning district policies and practices to embrace diversity and equity. This group should focus on raising staff expectations for all students as well as communicating and demonstrating these in all schools.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	Results from this initiative have not been fully communicated at the school and community level.
<b>5. Deficiency</b>	<b>District leadership has not ensured that curriculum implementation and assessment practices are effectively monitored.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	District leadership should review and revise curriculum to ensure all students access to a curriculum aligned with current Kentucky's standards (e.g. Academic Expectations, Kentucky Core Content For Assessment version 4.1 including Depth of Knowledge, Transformations and the revised Program of Studies). Leadership should develop a plan to monitor implementation by the instructional staff to ensure the curriculum remains rigorous, intentionally aligned and utilized in all classrooms. District and school leadership should ensure that teachers are trained to analyze student work and use the analysis to inform instruction. Leadership should monitor the use of technology as an integral part of instructional practices.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	Deficiency #5 has been partially implemented.  District administrators worked with the middle and high school teachers last summer on aligning the curriculum maps for grades 6-12 with Core Content 4.1 and the revised Program of Studies. The district walkthrough process is designed to check the pacing of instruction in individual classrooms based on the curriculum maps. Based on district and school walkthroughs that have taken place, teachers are beginning to utilize their curriculum maps and are using daily objectives in their lessons. The process of analyzing student work has been fully implemented at the middle school level, and only introduced at the high school. Additional documentation regarding the monitoring of the technology usage in the classroom is needed.

<b>6. Deficiency</b>	<b>District leadership has not developed a formal written vision statement accompanied by belief statements to focus and guide the district's long and short-term work.</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	This process should include review and revision of the mission statement and involve all stakeholders. Leadership should communicate the vision, mission and beliefs. Leadership should use its vision to guide long range planning and decision-making and to provide focus for district programs.
<b>Current Status of Progress</b>	Results from this initiative have not been fully communicated at the school level.

## Conclusion

District leadership has completed components of the improvement plan, including work with the school councils and curriculum alignment and mapping. The district also provided professional development training with Malcolm Smith, Mike Rutherford, and Robert Barr to help address the needs of diverse learners. In addition, the district provides CHAMPS training for all new teachers and follow-up training called “Teaching Tough Kids” on Saturdays. District and school leadership should continue to focus on implementation of professional development in the classroom and fully monitor to ensure impact on teaching and student learning.

District leadership has ensured that all schools in the district are using the ThinkLink assessment three times per year to identify students in need of academic intervention. Systemic and tiered interventions for all identified students should be fully implemented, used to drive instruction, and monitored for impact. As the district continues to work on the school assistance plan, intentional steps should be taken to involve the HSEs in the process for collaboration and resources.